

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DUBLIN 01615 121819Z

66

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /055 W

----- 078538

R 121655Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6167

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DUBLIN 1615

LONDON POUCH BELFAST

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR PGOV EI

SUBJ: LORD O'NEILL EXPECTS BRITISH WITHDRAWAL WITHIN FIVE YEARS

1. LORD TERENCE O'NEILL, EX-NI PRIME MINISTER, GAVE A GLOOMY INTERVIEW TO IRISH TIMES NOVEMBER 9. A RESPECTED PROTESTANT MODERATE, HIS VIEWS AND PREDICTIONS CARRY CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT IN DUBLIN -- PERHAPS MORE THAN IN BELFAST.

2. O'NEILL, WHO SITS IN HOUSE OF LORDS, DID NOT BELIEVE THAT BRITISH PEOPLE WOULD BE WILLING TO "PUT UP THE MEN AND MONEY FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS IN NORTHERN IRELAND." IF BRITISH DO WITHDRAW BEFORE A SOLUTION IS ACHIEVED, HE EXPECTS "A SIMPLE RETURN TO PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY IN NORTHERN IRELAND." THE REAL PROTESTANT FEAR IS THAT THEY WILL LOSE PRIVILEGED POSITION THEY HAVE BUILT UP OVER THREE HUNDRED YEARS. IN SHORT TERM, PROTESTANTS WILL FIGHT AND WIN, "BUT I CANNOT SEE A PROTESTANT STATE IN THE ATLANTIC BEING A REALISTIC PROPOSITION. I DO NOT SEE HOW IT COULD SURVIVE." O'NEILL THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE THAT THERE WOULD BE A SITUATION IN WHICH SCOTS CAME OVER TO SUPPORT NI PROTESTANTS, WHILE BOSTON IRISH JOINED THE CATHOLIC SIDE. "AND THIS IS NOT JUST WILD THINKING."

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DUBLIN 01615 121819Z

3. O'NEILL THOUGHT THAT "POWER-SHARING" UNDER SHORT-LIVED NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE WAS "THE GREATEST THING THAT HAPPENED IN MY LIFETIME," AND HE REGRETTED THAT PRESSURE FOR A COUNCIL OF IRELAND HAD BROUGHT DOWN THE EXECUTIVE. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT IF THERE HAD BEEN NO COUNCIL OR IRELAND OR SECURITY PROBLEMS TO PROMOTE CONTROVERSY, "PEOPLE LIKE PAISLEY WOULD HAVE FOUND SOMETHING ELSE TO BRING DOWN POWER-SHARING WITH." O'NEILL ALSO REGRETTED THAT PM COSGRAVE HAD VOTED AGAINST THE BILL TO LEGALIZE CONTRACEPTION, THEREBY GIVING "PAISLEYITES THE CHANCE TO GO ROLLING UP AND DOWN THE SHANKILL SHOUTING ABOUT THE FREE STATE." O'NEILL SUGGESTED THAT NI SECRETARY MERLYN REES SHOULD BE REPLACED BY SOMEONE "WHO CAN TAKE FIRM DECISIONS AND THEN BE SURE HE WILL GET THE FULL BACKING OF THE CABINET IN LONDON."

4. COMMENT: O'NEILL HAS CERTAINLY REINFORCED THE WIDESPREAD IRISH FEAR THAT BRITISH WILL WITHDRAW BEFORE ACHIEVING A VIABLE NI SOLUTION. THIS HAS, IN FACT BECOME ALMOST THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM. WITHDRAWAL MUST NOW BE CONSIDERED AS ONE POSSIBLE SCENARIO, THOUGH WE DO NOT THINK IT IS QUITE AS INEVITABLE (OR AS EASY FOR THE BRITISH) AS SOME OF THE COMMENTATORS. THE IMPORTANT POINT MAY BE THAT MANY PLANS ARE NOW BEING MADE IN THE EXPECTATION OF WITHDRAWAL, AND THIS IS NOT HELPING THE CLIMATE FOR POLITICAL COMPROMISE.
MOORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, NEWSPAPERS, PRESS CONFERENCES, POLITICAL SITUATION, TROOP REDUCTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974DUBLIN01615
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740326-0284
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741151/aaaabrlm.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LORD O'NEILL EXPECTS BRITISH WITHDRAWAL WITHIN FIVE YEARS
TAGS: PBOR, PGOV, MPOL, EI, UK, IRISH TIMES, (O'NEILL, LORD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005